

Delaware Harness Racing Commission
Rules Committee Meeting
March 5, 2019 at 9:00 A.M.

Dover Downs – Kent Room

In Attendance:

Mark Davis, Executive Director	Beth Steele, DHRC Chairman
Stacey Cohee, DAG	George Staats, Commissioner

Dover Downs Vice President of Racing Charles Lockhart, Sr., Dover Downs Sr. Director of Racing John Hensley, Harrington Raceway General Manager Jim Boese, Harrington Raceway Asst. GM Matt Sparacino, Harrington Facilities Manager Karen Kraft, DSOA Executive Director Sal DiMario, DSBF Executive Administrator Judy Davis-Wilson, DHRC Chief Veterinarian Dr. John Whiston, VMD and Horseman George Dennis.

Minutes: Donna Krol

Andrew Kerber was unable to attend. Stacey Cohee sat in for Andrew Kerber.

CALL TO ORDER

At 9:15 a.m. Chairman Steele called the rules committee meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

Minutes

Minutes from the 1-8-19 Rules meeting were reviewed. Chairman Steele entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Minutes were approved with correction noted by Judy Davis-Wilson. Motion passed with unanimous voice vote.

Discussion Items:

1. **Outrider at Delaware Harness Tracks Dover Downs and Harrington Raceway update:**

John Hensley from Dover Downs updated the Rules Committee on the hiring of an Outrider. Sarah Knight was hired and drug tested but her primary job schedule would not allow the flexibility needed to perform outrider duties. Karen Craft from Harrington Raceway has been in touch with Del State but has not found anyone to date. Jason Thompson may be interested; Karen Craft will contact him. Matt Sparacino stated that Harrington Raceway has advertised for the outrider position with the USTA and Delaware Equine Council but have had no response. Charles Lockhart cautioned that an over eagerness to hire an outrider will result in someone not capable of doing the job.

Both Dover Downs and Harrington Raceway will continue the search for an Outrider and continue to update the Rules Committee.

2. **DHRC Rule 8.3.5.9.4.2 – Changes proposed by Sal DiMario**

8.3.5.9.4.2 2nd time within 365 day period - the horse must serve a 30 day(s) suspension from racing, provided that the horse must be added to or remain on the Bleeder List, **and must complete a satisfactory qualifying race before resuming racing**, after the mandatory 30-day rest period; after 365 days without another incident of EPIH all horses revert back to a first time bleeder status;

Sal DiMario proposes striking the above in red from rule 8.3.5.9.4.2. According to Sal DiMario this causes a burden on the horseman and the 30 days can turn in to 40 depending on where in the week the horse comes off the rest period.

Also noted by Sal DiMario is that this situation would not occur very often. Horseman, George Dennis spoke to the committee. Mr. Dennis feels that the owners are being penalized with this rule. "This is an owner driven business and owners are becoming scarce." Mr. Dennis also stated that he feels the Qualifying line does not reflect what the horse can really do; the horse just has to go within 2 minutes. Dr. John Whiston objected and referred to the letter that he and Dr. Kristen Near submitted to the Rules Committee with regard to DHRC Rule 8.3.5.9.4.2 and the previously changed DHRC Rule 8.3.5.9.4.1. Dr. Whiston feels the qualifying race assures the Vet's and the betting public that the horses are able bodied to race. The DHRC Vets will only see EIPH if a horse bleeds out from their nostrils. The cure for EIPH is rest not the use of Lasix. Damage of EIPH is cumulative and scar tissue forms. Mr. Dennis noted that even though a horse is out they will still be trained so a qualifier race is irrelevant. Dr. Whiston explained that a qualifier race is a "softer" race and allows the vet's to see the horses' performance.

After discussion was completed Sal DiMario made a motion to change DHRC Rule 8.3.5.9.4.2 as proposed. Jim Boese seconded the motion.

A vote was taken:

YES (2): Sal DiMario, Jim Boese

NO (5): Beth Steele, George Staats, Mark Davis, Judy Davis-Wilson & Charles Lockhart

Motion did not pass.

Public Comment:

Rules Committee Meetings are considered Public Meetings and will follow the same guidelines as public meetings including: agenda posted on State Calendar, minutes taken during the meeting, approved at the next Rules Meeting and posted on State Calendar.

CLOSE OF MEETING:

With no further business to discuss Chairman Steele made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by John Hensley. Motion passed with unanimous voice vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m.

Next Rules Committee Meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2019.